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WASHINGTON -- The House yesterday overwhelmingly approved a resolution demanding the U.N. Security Council press genocide charges against Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad for threatening the destruction of Israel.

The resolution, which passed in a 411-2 vote, says the House "condemns, in the strongest terms, [the Iranian president's] offensive remarks, contemptible statements, and reprehensible policies aimed at the destruction of the State of Israel."

The resolution also called on the United Nations to take steps to stop Iran's suspected nuclear weapons program and reaffirmed "the steadfast commitment of the United States to defend the right of Israel to exist as a free and democratic state."

"In the past, dictators often tell us what crimes they will commit long before they strike," said Rep. Mark Steven Kirk, the Illinois Republican who wrote the bill with Rep. Steven R. Rothman, New Jersey Democrat.

"If we learn from that lesson, we will take early action against the Iranian leader who has told us that he hopes to murder many."

The resolution came a day after Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert met with President Bush, who encouraged the Israeli leader to pursue new Middle East peace talks amid Palestinian upheaval.

Mr. Bush said he shared Israel's concern about Mr. Ahmadinejad's vows to annihilate the Jewish state while simultaneously seeking nuclear weapons.

"As a strong ally of Israel, I view that as a serious threat to its security — not only the security of Israel, but the security of the Middle East," Mr. Bush said Tuesday with Mr. Olmert by his side at an Oval Office press conference.

Mr. Ahmadinejad insists that his country is pursuing peaceful nuclear power, but the United Nations remains suspicious of Iran's secretive uranium enrichment program.

The "no" votes were cast by Rep. Dennis J. Kucinich, Ohio Democrat, and Rep. Ron Paul, Texas Republican — both of whom are running for their respective parties' nominations.

"There is reasonable doubt with regard to the accuracy of the translations of President Ahmadinejad's words in this resolution," Mr. Kucinich said. "President Ahmadinejad's speeches can also be translated as a call for regime change, much in the same manner the Bush administration has called for regime change in Iraq and Iran, making this resolution very ironic."

The United States' tense relations with Iran have grown more strained over accusations that Tehran smuggles arms and explosives to Iraqi Shi'ites, spurring sectarian violence and attacks on U.S. troops.

The House resolution urged the U.N. Security Council to charge Mr. Ahmadinejad with violating the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which also outlaws "direct and public incitement to commit genocide."

The resolution cited several occasions when Mr. Ahmadinejad threatened the existence of Israel, including his call for the nation to be "wiped off the map" in October 2005 at the "World Without Zionism Conference" in Tehran.

"Why is it important for the United States House of Representatives to speak?" said Mr. Rothman said in a floor speech earlier in the week. "Because we will not be silent in the face of this lunatic madman who threatens us and threatens our allies."